

Foulois bio author will sign books at MacArthur Field

By Steve Elliott
FSH Public Affairs

Carroll V. Glines, who co-authored an autobiography with aviation pioneer Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois, will be here as part of the Centennial of Military Flight celebrations going on at Fort Sam Houston early next month, signing copies of a revised version of his book.

"Foulois is without doubt the best kept secret in U.S. military aviation history," Glines said of the iconic – yet largely unknown figure in the history of American air power. "His story ranks with any of the greats of his era."

The book is an updated version of the original 1968 autobiography titled "From the Wright Brothers to the Astronauts: The Memoirs of Benjamin D. Foulois," and will debut at two book signings at Fort Sam Houston to coincide with the centennial observance of U.S. military aviation March 1-2.

The new edition is titled, "Foulois: One Man Air Force," and also serves as the basis for a full-length documentary film. Book signings are scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon and 2 to 4 p.m. Mar. 1 at MacArthur Field, inside the hanger and next to an actual Wright B Flyer.

Glines has authored 36 books and more than 750 articles on military aviation in magazines and official publications as a freelance writer since 1954. His books include biographies of aviators Jimmy Doolittle, Roscoe Turner and Bernt Balchen and such subjects as "Around the World in 175 Days," "The Doolittle Raid" and "Those Legendary Piper Cubs: Their Role in War and Peace."

"I spent more than a year and a half interviewing Foulois over 50 years ago while writing the first manuscript and am determined to see the book published again in my lifetime," the 89-year-old author Glines said of his work. "When we had finished, he was more than an interview – he was my close friend. Unfortunately, the plates to his biographical memoirs were inexplicably lost – and so his story has languished for decades."

During his military tenure, Foulois – the son of a plumber – was instrumen-

tal in starting and moving the cause of American airpower forward. He begins with making the first military flight with Orville Wright, to the first U.S. Army air mission searching for the Mexican bandit Pancho Villa in 1916, to making sure the United States had the planes and pilots to win two world wars.

"The Foulois story spans military aviation from his teaching himself to fly based on letter correspondence with Orville Wright, to working with U.S. pilots who would go on to become astronauts," said executive producer Alan E. Ericksen, president of Nexcel Media/Flying Start Group, a Dallas-based firm that owns the rights to the original memoirs. "Along the way, Foulois has history-changing encounters with the icons of that era: Lindbergh, Doolittle, MacArthur, and even Hermann Goering – who went on to lead Hitler's air force in World War II. He even had an epic feud with Billy Mitchell. You couldn't make up a story that good!"



Retired U.S. Air Force Col. Carroll V. Glines during interviews with retired Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois while formulating the first book addressing his memoirs and role in securing U.S. air power. The original book, titled "From the Wright Brothers to the Astronauts: The Memoirs of Benjamin D. Foulois," was published by McGraw-Hill in 1968 and a new revision titled "Foulois: One Man Air Force" is being released.



Courtesy photos
Lt. Benjamin D. Foulois and Orville Wright during the airplane tests at Fort Myer, Va., in 1908. With Wright as his pilot, Foulois was the first military member to make a flight in the history of American military aviation.

Foulois was influential during an important time in aviation history. The "aero plane" had proved that heavier-than-air flight was impossible, but the U.S. military still had no vision of or interest in its potential as a wartime asset.

Foulois relentlessly championed the cause of U.S. military aviation, often to the detriment to his own career. His is a story has remained largely hidden from public view since the unexplained loss of his original biography — shortly after being published by McGraw-Hill in 1968.

The new Foulois biography book will be a "reborn" version by the same author, drawing again from the actual memoirs of Foulois.

Glines, a U.S. Air Force veteran and retired colonel, was handpicked by Foulois to co-author his memoirs based on Glines' other aviation books and career as a U.S. military pilot.

The new version also features a foreword by Roger G. Miller, Ph.D., deputy director Air Force Historical Studies Office, and will offer an updated epilogue and rare photos from the early days of aviation.

"Foulois: One Man Air Force," is also being offered in digital form, as a text download for e-readers, and will be available as an audio book, to ensure that the Foulois story is preserved. Glines has won numerous writing awards, including the Lauren D. Lyman Award from the Aviation/Space



Writers Association and the Freedoms Foundation Medal "for outstanding achievement in bringing about a better understanding of the American way of life."

The upcoming release is the first phase of an overall effort to bring this story to the American people. A documentary film by the same title is now in pre-production, and footage will include scenes from the centennial celebration at Fort Sam Houston. The event itself is predicated on Foulois' first flight at the San Antonio army post in 1910.

"Fort Sam Houston will provide a remarkable touchstone with history, since it was there that Foulois flew the Army's first plane and trained the first generations of American military pilots," said Ericksen, who brings to this project nearly three decades of experience in all facets of the media business. "There, we will capture demonstrations of early-period aircraft to introduce a whole new generation of Americans to the fragile – and often fatal – first flirtations with American air power."

"Having this book in revised form will give all Americans, especially the young, a brand new appreciation for the bravery and sacrifice that went into making America the world's premier air power," Glines said. "It will be my pleasure to introduce them to an amazing American hero, and one whom they have probably never heard of before."

Glines has been profiled in "Who's Who in America" since 1976 and has been Curator for the Gen. James H. Doolittle Library at the University of Texas at Dallas since 1995. He is the historian for Doolittle's Tokyo Raiders.

Glines was a command pilot during his 27 years of Air Force service from 1941 to 1968 and was qualified in 35 different types of planes. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, Air Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal.

For more information about the book and film project, including additional news assets, visit the project Web site at <http://www.onemanairforce.com>.